



NHL Executive Summary



Name of Property: Quincy Mining Company Historic District NHL (update)
City, State: Hancock (vicinity), Michigan
Period of Significance: 1856-1920
NHL Criteria: 1, 5
NHL Theme: V: Developing the American Economy
Extraction and production
Workers and work culture
I: Peopling Places
Communities and neighborhoods

Previous Recognition:

Quincy Mine No. 2 Shaft Hoist House (1970, NR# 70000271)
Quincy Mining Company Historic District NHL (1989, NR#8901095)
Keweenaw National Historical Park (1992, NR#1000108)
Quincy Mining Company Stamp Mills Historic District (2007, NR# 07000750)
Historic American Engineering Record No. MI-2

National Historic Contexts:

Labor History in the United States NHL Theme Study (2022)
X. Westward Expansion of the British Colonies and the United States, 1773-1898
E. The Mining Frontier
XII. Business
A. Extractive or Mining Industry
XVIII. Technology (Engineering and Invention)
F. Extraction and Conversion of Industrial Raw Materials



- G. Industrial Production Processes
- XXX. American Ways of Life
- C. Industrial Towns

NHL Significance:

- Under Criterion 1 the district is associated with the Quincy Mining Company and the mid-nineteenth century coming of age of copper mining in the United States. With copper’s extensive use as a conductor of electricity, the United States changed from a dispersed, agrarian country to a complex industrial and urban nation.
- Copper production on the Keweenaw Peninsula, the country’s first major copper mining district, differed from earlier copper mines in the country due to geologic variation, the grade of available copper ore, changes in copper processing technology, changes in management practices, and increases in capital investments.
- The Quincy Mining Company dominated copper production in the country’s first major copper mining district, the Upper Michigan’s Keweenaw Peninsula, from the first explorations of the 1840s—and particularly after opening the rich Pewabic Lode—until it was eclipsed by Western mines in the 1880s. The Quincy Mining Company, “Old Reliable,” survived the longest and (along with the Calumet & Hecla Mining Company) produced the most copper in the nation during this period.
- Under Criterion 5 the historic resources of the Quincy Mining Company Historic District collectively comprise an intact landscape that outstandingly represents the process by which copper mining became a dominant industry in Michigan and the United States from the 1850s to the early twentieth century. This includes resources associated with extraction, transportation, milling, smelting, and housing.
- The revised NHL nomination expands the boundary of the Quincy Mining Company Historic District NHL to include the Quincy stamp mill complex and the Mason Housing Location, as well as the Quincy and Torch Lake Railroad corridor that connects these areas to the mining operations and associated housing that were included in the 1989 NHL designation.

Integrity:

- Since the original 1989 NHL designation, the Quincy Mining Company Historic District has not substantially changed. The seven aspects of integrity remain high overall, and the district continues to retain resources and landscapes associated with copper ore extraction, transportation, processing through milling and smelting, along with employee and company management housing.
- The industrial core, the Quincy stamp mill, the Quincy and Torch Lake Railroad Corridor, and the Quincy smelter areas are integral to the character of the historic district. The industrial core contains unused industrial buildings that are in varying conditions, from foundations to intact buildings. The use of the No. 2 Shaft area and the Quincy smelter as interpretive sites has maintained them with a higher degree of integrity than some other areas. However, the full scale of the mining process is expressed through the survival of multiple shaft locations and resource clusters along the extent of the Pewabic Lode in the district, illustrating the progression of ore from its collection on the surface to its distribution and processing at the stamp mill and smelter site.
- The company housing locations are integral to the character of the historic district. The overall form, massing, and pattern of buildings on the landscape continue to identify them as Quincy company housing, with distinctions in lot size and density, and design. With regard to materials and design, some houses have been modified with garages, new windows, and replacement siding. New



housing infill is limited, and in scale, massing, and placement, the new houses are compatible and do not detract from the overall character of the district.

- The district boundary has been amended to exclude locations where there has been substantial new development, or extensive deterioration or loss of historic resources since 1989 such that location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association have been greatly impacted.

Owner of Property:

Private, Houghton County, State of Michigan, Keweenaw National Historical Park (National Park Service)

Acreage of Property: 1,063.46

Origins of Nomination:

This update to the original 1989 NHL nomination was completed on behalf of the Keweenaw National Historical Park and the Keweenaw National Historical Park Advisory Commission. It provides an expanded and up-to-date inventory of contributing and non-contributing resources, a revised significance statement and expanded context, and a revised period of national significance that reflects current historical interpretations to meet NHL guidelines. The NHL boundary has been revised to include additional resources directly associated with Quincy Mining Company's operations and to remove areas that have lost integrity.

Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:

- The more detailed description of the historic district and inventory of all contributing and non-contributing resources can aid the National Park Service, its partners, and private property owners in planning, resource management, and interpretation.
- The revised statement of significance and greatly expanded context offers an up-to-date interpretation of copper mining history in the United States, reflecting current scholarship.
- Technical assistance from the Keweenaw National Historical Park and the Keweenaw Historical Commission provides opportunities for property owners to preserve their resources, or develop sensitive new infill.

Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:

Low. A public open house held on June 12 generated questions about the benefits of NHL designation and the role played by the Keweenaw National Historical Park and the Keweenaw National Historical Park Advisory Commission, but response was generally favorable.

Public Comments Favoring Designation (received as of December 21, 2023):

- Representative Gregory Markkanen, District 110, Michigan House of Representatives

Landmarks Committee Comments:

- Revise to ensure a more balanced approach to discussions of labor relations, corporate paternalism, housing, and worker communities. Identify ways in which workers exercised agency within the framework of corporate paternalism by choosing housing options and summarize the grievances that immediately precipitated the 1913-1914 strike.
- Provide succinct overview of the ethnic and immigrant groups, including Finnish Americans, among workers, working conditions in the mines, living conditions in company housing, and the adequacy of wages paid to workers by the companies.
- Note nature of relationship between the Calumet and Quincy copper companies, which were competitors and had differing management practices, but colluded regarding worker pay and benefits.



- Provide additional information on archeological potential and why Criterion 6 was not used.

Landmarks Committee Recommendation:

The Committee recommends that the National Park System Advisory Board recommend to the Secretary of the Interior the acceptance of the NHL updated documentation for the Quincy Mining Company Historic District National Historic Landmark in the vicinity of Hancock, Michigan, with any additions and corrections as noted by the Committee being made prior to the nomination being forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior for action.

Advisory Board Recommendation:

The National Park System Advisory Board recommends to the Secretary of the Interior the acceptance of the updated NHL documentation for the Quincy Mining Company Historic District National Historic Landmark in the vicinity of Hancock, Michigan.